

A magnifying glass with a black handle and frame is positioned over a document. The lens is focused on a single, detailed fingerprint. The fingerprint is dark and shows clear ridge patterns. In the background, other fingerprints are visible but out of focus. One fingerprint to the left is reddish, and another to the right is dark. A blue line on the document passes through the fingerprints, with the word "INDEX" visible in blue capital letters. The overall lighting is soft, and the colors are slightly muted, giving it a professional, forensic feel.

# **Program Evaluation**

**ED 740 Study Team Project**

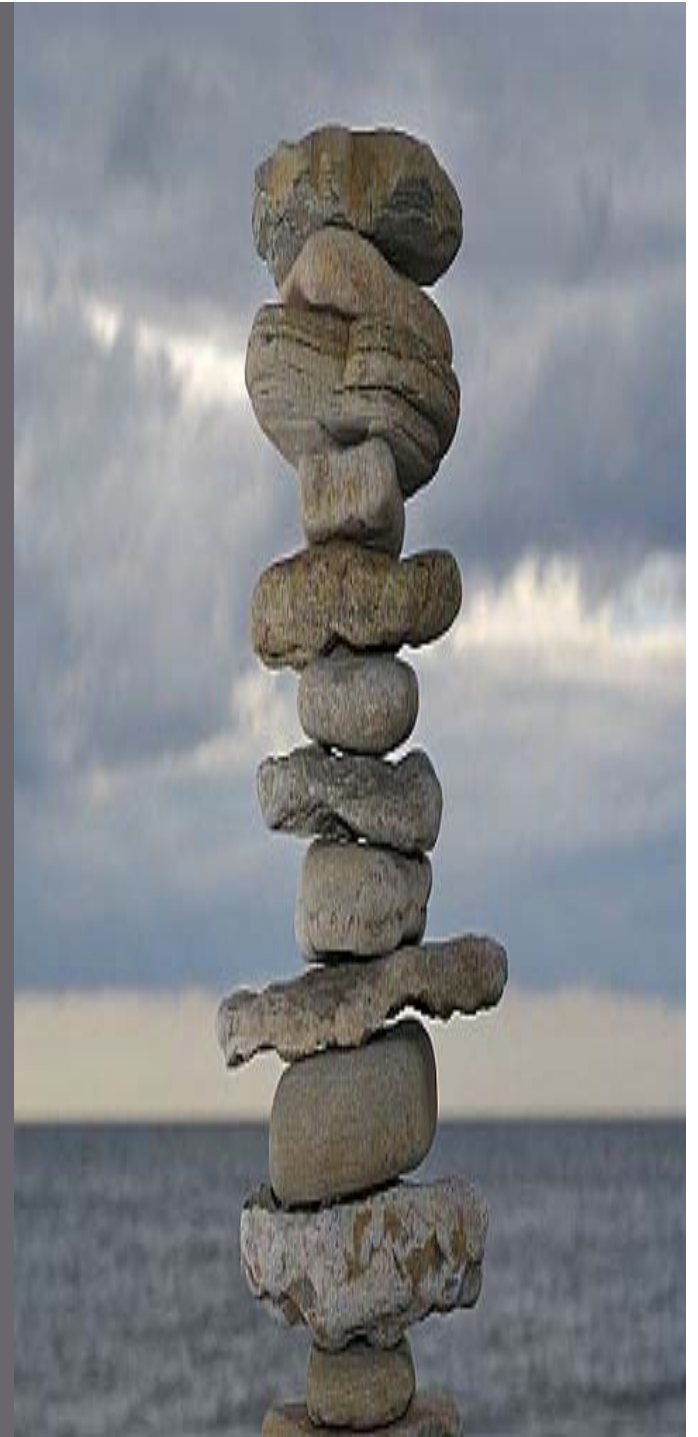


## Program Evaluation

**A systematic method for collecting analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies and programs, particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency.**

# Building Blocks

- Assessing needs
- Assessing program theory
- Assessing implementation
- Determining causation
- Reliability, Validity and Sensitivity
- The Shoestring Approach
- Methodological challenges



A magnifying glass with a dark handle and a large, clear lens is positioned over a newspaper. The lens is focused on a specific area of the text, which is slightly blurred. The newspaper's masthead and various columns of text are visible, creating a background of fine print and bold headlines. The overall image has a blueish tint, giving it a professional and analytical feel.

# **Needs Assessment**

**and**

# **Program Theory Assessment**





# **Needs Assessment**

- **Examines the target population to determine if the need specified in the program is in fact a problem.**
- **If so, how the problem might best be dealt with?**



# Needs Assessment

*Includes...*

- **Identifying and diagnosing the actual problem the program is trying to address**
- **Who or what is affected by the problem?**
- **How widespread is the problem?**
- **What are the measurable effects that are caused by the problem?**

A blue-tinted photograph showing two hands holding two interlocking puzzle pieces. The hands are positioned on the left and right sides of the frame, with fingers visible. The puzzle pieces are dark blue and have a glossy finish. The background is a light blue, textured surface. The overall image conveys a sense of problem-solving and assembly.

# **Example...**

**Housing program aimed at mitigating homelessness.**



# **Program Theory Assessment**

- **An assumption, implicit in the way the program is designed, about how the program's action are supposed to achieve the outcomes it intends.**
- **Assesses whether the logic is plausible**
- **Important to review existing research that has been done in the area.**



A blue-tinted photograph showing two hands holding puzzle pieces. The hands are positioned on the left and right sides of the frame, with fingers gripping the edges of the pieces. The puzzle pieces are dark blue and have a standard interlocking shape. The background is a bright, hazy blue, suggesting a sky or a light source. The overall mood is one of assembly or completion.

# **Example...**

## **HIV Prevention Program**

A yellow pencil is positioned horizontally across the lower half of the image, pointing towards the left. The background is a green grid pattern, which is slightly blurred. The text 'Assessing Implementation' is centered in the upper half of the image, written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

# **Assessing Implementation**



# **Assessing Implementation**

- **Process Evaluation**
- **Impact Evaluation**
- **Cost – Benefit Analysis**



## **Process Evaluation**

**Describes the functions of the program: who received services, what were the services, what were the environmental factors of the program and when were the service delivered?**






# Examples of Data Collection

- Demographic information
- Number of persons served in program
- Description of intake and assessment process, number of interviews or interactions, description of number of training activities, specific curriculum delivered
- Time and length of specific intervention activities
- Context in which activities were delivered
- Examination of how long services were delivered
- Descriptors of who delivered services



## **Impact Evaluation**

**Attempts to answer the question of what behaviors, attitudes, community change or other hypothesized expected improvement occurred as a result of the program's activities.**



# **Cost - Benefit Analysis**

**An assessment of different alternatives in order to see whether the benefits outweigh the costs.**

**A monetary value or other measurement unit is placed on both tangible and intangible factors related to implementation of a specific activity.**

**Cost-benefit analysis attempts to assess if the program's benefits exceed the program's implementation costs.**



# Example

**\$8,000 cost for installation of energy efficient windows by homeowner**

**-\$1,200 rebate**

**= \$6,800 cost paid by owner**

**\$1,000 annual electric bill before installation of windows**

**$\$6,800 / \$200 = 34$  years before return on investment**



A coiled red tennis racket string with a metal ferrule, resting on a light blue textured surface. The string is thick and has a textured, fibrous appearance. The ferrule is a small, cylindrical metal piece at one end of the string.

# **The Shoestring Approach**



## **The Shoestring Approach**

**Program evaluators conduct impact evaluations when working under budget, time, or data constraints.**



# **The Shoestring Approach**

- The evaluator is not called in until the project is already well advanced
- Tight deadline for completing the evaluation
- Combined with a limited budget and without access to baseline data
- Budget, political, or methodological reasons it is not possible to collect baseline data on a control group
- Dealing with constraints related to costs, time and data

# **The Shoestring Approach cont.**



- **Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation design**
- **Taking measures to address the threats and strengthen the evaluation design and conclusions**
- **When necessary, many of these corrective measures can be introduced at a very late state**
- **The approach was designed to assist evaluators working in developing countries, the principles are equally applicable in industrial nations**





# **Determining Causation**



## **Chicken or the Egg**

## **Causation**

- **Direct causation is very difficult**
- **Without randomly assigned test and control groups, providing causation is impossible**
- **Conclusively showing that an intervention has created a data point requires longitudinal studies**





## **Chicken or the Egg**

## **Causation**

- **Multiple resources interact in a setting which may or may not impact results**
- **Self-selection in programs being evaluated contributes to the problem**
- **Another consideration must be unintended results – both positive and negative**

# **Reliability, Validity and Sensitivity**







## **Reliability, Validity and Sensitivity**

**Credible evaluations rely on the use of reliable, valid and sensitive instruments.**



## **Reliability is...**

**the “extent to which the measure produces the same results when used repeatedly to measure the same thing” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 218).**



## **Validity is...**

**the “extent to which it measures what it is intended to measure” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 219).**



## **Sensitivity**

- the instrument must be able to discern potential changes on the social problem
- the instrument is insensitive if it contains items measuring outcomes which the program couldn't possibly effect (Rossi et al., 2004).

A person is climbing a dark, textured rock face on the left side of the image. The background is a vibrant sunset or sunrise with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water below. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds. The word "Challenges" is written in a large, bold, black font in the center of the image.

# Challenges





## **Challenges**

**The challenges of program evaluation vary from organization to organization, region to region, and country to country.**



## **Challenges**

- **Cost:** can be expensive
- **Expertise:** require a high level of expertise to verify the goals of the program
- **Measurement:** must ensure the performance measures will answer the questions that will determine the effectiveness of the program
- **Time:** can be time consuming and could divert staff from day-to-day functioning



## **Challenges when conducting program evaluations in developing countries:**

### **Culture**

**“Culture can influence many facets of the evaluation process, including data collection, evaluation of the program implementation, and the analysis and understanding of the results of the evaluation” (Ebbutt, 1998).**



## **Challenges when conducting program evaluations in developing countries:**

### **Language**

**“Language can be a major barrier to communicating concepts which the evaluator is trying to access, and translation is often required” (Ebbutt, 1998).**